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Nationalism Today. Nationalism Yesterday. Nationalism Tomorrow.

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Moments of Nationalism: Global and Local Intersections in Canadian Literature

Abstract: As the strength of nation-states seems to have declined in the face of globalizing forces and modern discourses which disavow the fixity of their frontiers, the question emerges whether national identification is vanishing alongside the structures that support it. Certainly, the exclusivist restrictions and homogenizing tendencies inherent to nationalism must be redressed in order to accommodate the socio-cultural transformations that are taking place in an increasingly borderless world. In terms of emotional attachment, however, it cannot be denied that the nation provides one of the most salient contexts in which to locate notions of belonging and identity constructions. This paper offers a literary analysis of Jean McNeil's novel *The Interpreter of Silences*, in order to illustrate the phenomenon I call "moments of nationalism." I argue that, rather than disappearing altogether, national identification materializes temporarily in strategic individual and collective positionings. As overarching national narratives fail to incorporate the multiplicity of cultures and identities they intend to encompass, nationalism can no longer be read as a permanent, stable identity marker. Moments of nationalism are, on the contrary, ephemeral, and their articulation is mediated by intersections with the intranational context of the local-regional and the transnational context of the global.

Keywords: nationalism, moments of nationalism, transnationalism, regionalism, globalization, identity, Canada

Introduction

Recent discussions on globalization, transnationalism and diasporas often point out that nationalism, understood as a framework for individual and collective identification, has lost some of its previous pervasiveness. Following mainly Benedict Anderson's deconstructive approach to the nation as a natural, stable unit, some scholars have sought to destabilize the entity of the nation-state, especially as a result of globalization processes (see Paul Gilroy 1993; Arjun Appadurai 1996; Johannes Lenhard 2009). These debates have raised new ground for contestation, as it is obvious that nationalism is far from dead (as the recent political climate in Britain, the United States, or Spain, for instance, may come to demonstrate). On the other hand, nationalism's inclusive/exclusive impositions in terms of a single culture and a single identity associated to the idea of a single nation are necessarily to be redressed. To this, the regional or local level has to be added, a social and geographical dimension that often permeates cultural productions, at times superseding that of the nation. This paper aims at determining and describing processes of national identification which emerge within this complex interplay of global, local and national factors; the result of which I call "moments of nationalism." Through the exploration of a novel by Nova Scotian writer Jean McNeil, *The Interpreter of Silences* (2011), I argue that nationalism, in the sense of national identity, cannot be a permanent state of mind, nor an ontological frame of reference to which individuals or communities turn for durable self or collective definitions. Instead, moments of nationalism emerge at intersections with the local and the transnational, as temporary products of the socio-cultural entanglement between these levels of geographical division and identity comprehension. This novel is ideal to analyze the representation of moments of nationalism: the main characters are a family of Scottish descent, which, in Nova Scotia places them within the center of a historical and cultural milieu that identifies the region with the Scottish tradition. However, while being in a hegemonically

privileged position as regards ethnicity, or even class (in the case of the protagonist), the novel shows inconsistencies in processes of identification with local, national, and transnational contexts and cultural referents that will serve the purpose of illustrating the transience and malleability of the national identity.

The Shortcomings of the Nation-State and the Affective Appeal of Nationalism

Zygmunt Bauman has argued that "in our own times of 'liquid' modernity […] not just individual placements in society, but the places to which the individuals may gain access and in which they may wish to settle are melting fast and can hardly serve as targets for 'life projects'" (125). In this modern era of hyper-information, then, both subjectivities and the very spaces where subjects move are prone to the dissolution of fixed points of identification. The very physical structures which support society (at least in Western or Westernized contexts) offer a series of possibilities which depart from static notions of identity and instead thrive in the movement and circulation of identity markers. Nation-states, and nationalism (as a form of emotional appeal) seem no longer to participate in dynamic processes of identification. The ontological bases for nationalist sentiments appear to be outmoded in the face of modernity, mainly because nations often bring together one territory, one culture and one identity.

To see culture as occupying a "seemingly unproblematic" (Gupta and Ferguson 6) divided space; to have space fractured into neat compartments containing seamless cultures implies the assumption that cultures are essentially pure, susceptible of being holistically defined in territorial terms. "The nation," John McLeod argues, "is always imagined as a finite space, occupying a certain terrain, inclusive of a particular people, 'us' rather than 'them'" (101). Nationalisms operate by ignoring the fundamental creole component in cultures that complicates not only the nation-state's own spatial and political configurations, but also its claims to power, to dominate and create hierarchies and to include/exclude certain sectors of society from its premises. The creole component upsets immediate and unproblematic identifications between cultures and nations. Furthermore, as Arjun Appadurai has noted, far from being a spontaneous phenomenon, culture can be seen "as the process of naturalizing a subset of differences that have been mobilized to articulate group identity" (15). On the other hand, rather than containing only one single (creole) culture, "[m]ost modern nations consist of disparate cultures which were only unified […] by the forcible suppression of cultural difference" (Hall 296). There are important implications in recognizing that cultures are hybrid, plural and intentionally modified and shaped. It affects the ways in which identities are constructed, since the factors of creoleness, plurality and artificiality destabilize any straightforward conjunction between culture and territory. Nationalism and national identity are based on the alleged solidity of cultural narratives, of the history and the myths that support and help perpetuate themselves. As modernity gradually grasps the creole, plural, and artificial nature of culture, authority and appropriation are defeated, the power structure of nation-states weakened.

Affective allegiances to and identifications with the nation are deeply influenced by the fissures in the equation between culture and nation. As Robin Cohen puts it, "dominant, formerly monochromatic, cultures have themselves become criss-crossed and sometimes deeply subverted by hybridisation and creolization" (382). Even old-established nations in Europe, or "younger" nations with strong nationalist narratives such as the United States face similar challenges which, albeit not always recognized, often debunk absolutist claims to the nation's homogenizing forces. This shift in political and cultural perspectives has led critics to suggest that "the nation-state, as a complex modern political form, is on its last legs" (Appadurai 19). Is this the same as to affirm that nationalism no longer contributes to the development of individual or collective identities? It cannot be denied that geography, in the sense of place, still remains one of the most salient variables that convey identity. That identity is bound to place is often expressed in terms of the nation to which one belongs, following perhaps the inertia exerted by territorial division. It is not uncommon to hear "I am Portuguese" or "I am Indian" uttered as markers of self-definition. David McCrone and Frank Bechhofer suggest that "national identity is a mechanism for

giving people a sense of individual and collective worth" (10). Nationhood is used as a recurrent referent to define individuality, and geography and culture are still arguably tied together in the collective imaginary to a great extent. How can this be the case, given the aforementioned inconsistencies? The answer this paper offers to the paradox of nationalism as insufficient, yet accessible tool to express identification, lies in factors which are both external and internal to the concept of the nation. These are the levels of the transnational (the global) and the intranational (regional or local). It is only through relational contact with the transnational that moments of nationalism, understood as emotional filiation, emerge. These moments are regulated, in turn, by local and regional factors, to the point that one cannot exist without the other. Thus, going back to the example of the person who says "I am Portuguese" or "I am Indian," the actual, tangential meaning of these moments of nationalism is contingent on the intra- and transnational circumstances surrounding them.

Nationalism appeals to a fundamental longing for belonging and this underlies the construction of national discourses. As Stuart Hall maintains, "[t]he allegiance and identification which, in a pre-modern age or in more traditional societies, were given to tribe, people, religion, and region, came gradually in Western societies to be transferred to the national culture" (296). With the emergence of the nation-state, the imagined, but also physical and geographical space of identification has expanded to fit their borders. Often, critics separate the political (legal, economic, and so on) and the emotional (manifested in feelings of attachment and belonging) aspects of nation-states. Anthony Smith refers to this distinction in his seminal *National Identity* when he says that, "if a nation, however modern, is to survive in this world, it must do so on two levels: the socio-political and the cultural-psychological" (70). In Timothy Brennan's words, the term "nation" "refers both to the modern nation-state and to something more ancient and nebulous—the 'natio'—a local community, domicile, family, condition of belonging" (45). However, it is important to bear in mind how these spheres inform each other. It is precisely this "nebulous" emotional pull of the nation, which, due to its elusive nature, is hardly acknowledged as the one factor that keeps nation-states alive in this era of globalization. Affective allegiances to the contours of the state need to be assessed in order to discern how identity-identification incorporates (or not) those national attachments: how they are mediated, experienced, regulated. Amartya Sen refers to the importance of context when it comes to an individual's affiliation to different identity categories. He proposes that "the person may have to decide on the relative significance of the different affiliations, which could vary depending on the context" (29). While his insights are certainly useful in thinking about national identity as transient and dependent on contextual regulations, two factors have to be taken into account. The first is that national identity cannot always be influenced or changed according to a person's preference or choice. The degree of agency to identify with or feel attachment to a nation is highly restricted by elements outside the individual's intentions. While there might be certain flexibility, as in the case of hyphenated identities, a person who was born, for instance, in Spain, with no ties whatsoever to, say, Russia, could not claim, a priori, to have a Russian identity. Also, and partly as a result of this restriction, moments of nationalism, as understood in the present study, emerge in dialogue with global and local contexts mostly as part of an unconscious process. Transnational and intranational (or regional) experiences define and determine the emotional expression of national affiliations, and nationalism only does come into being through these tangible experiences. One essential factor that contributes to the brevity of national identification lies in its own unattainability and impossibility. As artificial discourse and imagined community, the affective manifestations of nationalism and the nation are necessarily ephemeral.

Colonialism, Regionalism and the Audacity of Canadian Nationalism

Translating these debates and theoretical frameworks to the territory of Canada is indeed both a challenge and a fertile starting point. As a relatively young nation (confederation took place in 1867 and it was not until 1982 that it obtained full independence from Britain), it has never fully participated in the

mirage of the nation's might and authority, as other European or European-based nations, long established for centuries, might have experienced. Nationalism was not promoted as such in Canada until the 1960s and 1970s. In terms of Benedict Anderson's insights of the nation as an imagined community, this is the period in Canadian history when nationalist symbols necessary to maintain and reinforce the idea of a coherent nation, such as the flag or the national anthem, are created. Literature, as Marie Vautier has pointed out, played an essential role in the construction of this national ideology, as it served "to reimagine the world in a post-European and postmodern manner" (21). The literature of writers like Margaret Laurence or Hugh MacLennan, the nationalist critical work by Northrop Frye or Margaret Atwood, are often read as postcolonial reactions against British literary and ontological models, and as the basis to forge an autonomous sense of Canadianness. These efforts, however, did not go far beyond this point, and gradually, what can only be called an identity crisis settled in. Questions, rather than assertions, populate Canadian literary and cultural criticism (see, for example, *Is Canada Postcolonial?* edited by Laura Moss, 2003). Scholars have repeatedly pointed out the sense of being lost, of something missing: for so long adhered to the British Empire, a lack of a self-narrative of the nation is such missing factor. On the other hand, proximity to the United States has also been mentioned as a crucial element in the hindrance of Canada's sense of itself. George Elliott Clarke mentions that, as a matter of fact, Canada has never ceased to be a colonized nation: it was colonized by Britain in the past and is currently colonized by the United States (35). A national discourse thus seems to flounder in the midst of these feeble foundations, and slips through eager fingers attempting to grasp it.

Another complex question is Canada's regional division. Certainly, an overarching national identity, which included the particularities of all its regions, must be an artificial creation (even more so than in other, more geographically concentrated nation-states). A fundamental element that problematizes the imagining of Canadian unity is its geographical vastness. Critics have frequently commented on the fact that the extensive territory of Canada and the isolation of its regional territories provokes marked differences, which is one of the main impediments to the construction of a common identity. As Robert Fulford maintains, "history strives earnestly to teach us its enduring lessons, but in Canada geography is our real teacher, the one to which we must listen with the greatest care. It is geography which sets the tone of Canadian life just as it sets the rules of our working lives and governs our economic relations with other countries" (51).

Regardless of the structural and systemic elements that are undeniably directed to the administrative or institutional synthesis of the diverse regions (such as parts of the legislation system, the national broadcast media, et caetera), Canada is mostly defined in terms of its pervasive regional differences. As a result, Donald Savoie argues, "the process of national integration, it seems, has been brought to a halt; things national are either no more, or in a serious state of disrepair" (203). The political and cultural detachment of Quebec is perhaps the most conspicuous dimension of this internal division, because it transcends the conflict from the physical frontiers to a cultural domain.

Historical and economic factors also contribute to this fragmentation, as Savoie points out, because there has been a very markedly unequal development of Canadian regions (as opposed to the equally vast territory that composes the United States), with the majority of economic and political power concentrated in central Canada (Savoie). The processes of marginalization and economic underdevelopment that ensue within peripheral regions result in the construction of localized socio-political areas as is the case, for example, of Atlantic Canada (Phillip Buckner 8). The collapse of the structure of the nation-state itself under the burden of international monopolies and globalizing pressures also affects the salience of regional identities: on the face of continental assimilation, national identity weakens and regionalism emerges as a way to balance the neocolonial situation in which Canada finds itself with respect to the United States (Marchak 90). These complex historical circumstances and political forces translate into the area of culture and literary production.

Canadian literature gravitates towards the regional mode of identity representation. As Herb Wyile argues, the focus on a literary regionalism may be read as a strategy of resistance against "totalizing formations of a national literature" ("Regionalism" 140). The hegemonic magnetism of literary productions in Ontario inevitably provokes the marginalization of literatures that do not conform to canonical models, a tendency that is combated through regionalism by the emphasis on more particular forms of cultural expression. Aesthetic and ontological values are thus decentralized and diversified. However, Wyile also issues a warning of the risks that dominant discourses on regionalist literatures may pose for literary representations that do not conform to those models. Thus, he maintains,

> in asserting a more localized literary sensibility and/or in reacting to a perceived Ontariocentrism in English Canadian literary culture, numerous critics writing about regionalism and/or regional literatures have repeated the same totalizing gestures on the regional level, either through a problematic environmental determinism […] or through the repetition of the strategies of thematic criticism in defining a regional literature. ("Regionalism" 142)

Thus, Canada remains, as Diana Brydon puts it, "a nation suspicious of nationalisms" (49), especially so in the current global climate of the decline of the structure of the nation-state as economic unit and as framework through which to define individual and collective identities. The conflation of nationalism with one form of ethnically dominant culture and political institutions, which is, in the case of Canada (as in many Western nations) the majoritarian white ethnicities, excludes other groups from the possibility of belonging. As both literature and critical scholarship demonstrate, this exclusion does not only affect individuals or communities who have a relatively short presence in Canada, but also those with a much longer history of settlement (such as Africadians, or groups of Black Canadians whose settlements date as early as the eighteenth century), on the grounds that their perceived racial otherness erases that history. It is for these reasons that the transnational modes of identification and cross-cultural representations emerge, in order to offer an alternative to the inherent constrictions of hegemonic nationalisms. In terms of race, as David Goldberg suggests, "[t]he state—and nation-state especially, where nation here becomes the cultural reproduction of hegemonic consensus to state administrative mandates—is all about institutionally reproductive homogenization" (30); but this homogenizing tendency is not limited to race and seeks to cover regional, class and gender differences. Canada posits an uneven terrain of analysis in that its regional divisions create ambivalent contexts of identification that complement, overlap or clash with national identifications. The Maritimes is a case in point, being one of the most marginalized and stereotyped regions in Canada, so that even though it historically and culturally contributes to the formation of a broad sense of Canadian nationalism it does so at the expense of often finding itself at the periphery of national narratives. Wyile suggests that "the region suffers and still suffers from a double standard in economic policy: what's good for central Canada is 'national,' and what's good for Atlantic Canada is 'regional'" (*Anne* 12). Thus, regional particularism operates to a point in which regional interests may directly interfere or clash with national ones. Furthermore race, class and gender add to this complex network of subjectivities and connections on levels of identification that vary from the very local to the global.

It is not surprising that, in the face of the tensions created by these identity discrepancies on the one hand, and the homogenizing tendency of the nation-state that functions to subsume these differences under a seamless hegemonic discourse, the attempt to delimit and to sustain the boundaries of Canadian nationalism proves an audacity. This suggests the question of whether the nation-state model should be totally disposed of, or rather, if it is more realistic and useful to conceive a national structure that is capable of preserving the multifaceted plurality of this postcolonial, global society. As Cynthia Sugars posits, the fact that "the vector of the nation continues to have profound psychic resonance for Canadians […] need not imply a robotic adherence to essentializing and dictatorial conceptualizations of the nation" ("Can the

Canadian Speak?" 117). In the calling into question of the nation's exclusionist constructions, Canada, as an ample and multifaceted "contact zone" (Pratt 34), offers unique and fertile historical and cultural coordinates in which to map an alternative, inclusionist approach to nationalism. Canada emerges as a complex nation, product of colonial, postcolonial and neo-colonial relations, shaped by Indigenous peoples, settlers, settler-invaders, ethnic minorities, diasporic and settled diasporic groups; each of these at times overlapping categories being simultaneously separated or intertwined by class, gender, sexuality or religion among others. Despite structural and ontological backlashes, national identification, understood as the affective dimension of nationalism derived from the geographical enclosing of culture and identity narratives, is not radically eliminated from the picture. The remainder of this paper is devoted to explore how experiences of nationalism are mediated by the local and the global in *The Interpreter of Silences*.

The Intersection of Intranational and Transnational Contexts in Literature

The main character in *The Interpreter of Silences*, Eve, is often presented as unproblematically Canadian, although the exact delimitations of what this identity constitutes are left unclear. One of the most outstanding narrative mechanisms employed to allude to the existence of a separate Canadian identity is through the contrast with and the points of view of characters from the United States. Margery Fee and Lynette Russell, in dealing with questions of whiteness and indigenous identities in Canada and Australia, write: "Canadian nationalists formed in the 1960s, like me, simply defined themselves in opposition to Americans (implicitly white, supportive of the war in Vietnam, imperialist, capitalist owners of Canadian resources, etc. etc.)" (190). This novel offers a glimpse of a similar definition of Canadianness which contrasts with the notion of American identities. One of the main contexts in which Americans are opposed to Maritimers' lifestyles is the general identification between Americans and the tourism industry (although it is occasionally extended to other groups, like the Germans). The isolated landscapes in which local people have to toil to survive are consumable commodities to American tourists who spend outrageous fortunes to have their holidays in Cape Breton. Commenting on the theme of the tourist industry being oriented to an American market, Eve remarks that "[t]he Yacht Club had been transformed from its original shack into a glassy structure with a restaurant and offices. The Yacht Club was for visiting Americans, wealthy mainlanders or the island's captains of industry" (McNeil 42). These Americans and upper-class people are arguably of Scottish descent like the main characters in the novel, but they are completely different from them: "These people had the same last names as Eve and her father, but still managed to look like another species, standing on the decks of their boats with their thin-soled deck shoes, their hard brown legs encased in canvas shorts. Eve has never set foot in the yacht club" (McNeil 42). Differences of nationality and class work here to create separate identities in a context which suggests an a priori seamless and common identification. The fact that the opposition between Canada and the United States is based on differences that exist in an apparent sameness is also recorded in one of the first conversations between Noel, an American man, and Eve, when he says: "I'm still trying to get a handle on why Canada is so different (…) [f]rom the States. Everything seems so similar—it looks the same, really, but yet it's completely foreign;" to which Eve attempts an explanation: "Well, there's the usual suspects: a parliamentary system, the social contract—based on European socialism more than frontier capitalism. But I think it's that Canadians have a nearly pathological common sense. You're not burdened by that" (McNeil 50).

This at times fictitious line that separates both cultures is also explored through the Americans' point of view. On one occasion, Noel and his girlfriend Rachel, also American, are driving through Nova Scotia and stopping at gas stations where "they bought unfamiliar brands of chocolate bars and potato chips—Crispy Cream and Humpty Dumpty—delighted that Canada was, after all, a different country" (McNeil 212). Here, Canadianness is ironically articulated through the presence of exotic consumable products, in

a world where globalization erases difference by establishing the same brands and corporations everywhere. A distinct cultural identity is thus reduced to the inconsequential display of distinct products. This is reflective of an anxiety of similarity Cynthia Sugars refers to when she says that Canada "might be too like the US to stand out in clear cultural or linguistic contradistinction to it and may therefore not be considered exotic or different enough" ("Worlding" 33). The contrast between Canada and the United States operates on a flimsy but stubborn level. It gains strength in a passage when, after having a nearly deathly accident on a boat ride where Eve was driving, Rachel threatens to sue her. This is an attitude that Noel deplores as "so *American*, threatening to sue when instant satisfaction was not forthcoming" (McNeil 273), which indicates both the presence of differences and the characters' awareness of them. There is a clear, if only brief, underlying intention to define Canadianness as a unique and specific culture and national identity. The intersectionality between the local and the transnational contexts (that is, the presence of the Americans in Cape Breton) provides one of the most conspicuous examples in the novel of a fleeting moment of nationalism. Personal identification of the main character with Canada is born here from contrast, from the temporal opposition with a perceived external difference.

This, however, is not the only way in which Canadianness surfaces in the text. Eve's sense of belonging is divided between what she feels is her natural relationship to Cape Breton, the one that limits her possibilities to lead a successful life, and the life she forges for herself in the urban context of Toronto. These tensions are constantly shaping her perception of the world and influence her in the taking of personal choices. For instance, it is mentioned that after majoring in Geology her first impulse was to become a scientist, but she could not adapt to fieldwork routines because they reminded her of her time in Cape Breton: "Her fault was to be too ornamental, too dazzled by form. She hated the outdoor life as well—shorts, muddy knees, sunburn. It was too much like her upbringing in the cabin" (McNeil 292). She goes on to become a gem-sourcer for a jewellery designer. This way she enters the realm of fashion shows, cosmetics, travelling, magazines and glamour. In her years between childhood and adolescence she often read *Vogue*, fascinated by its contents:

> She is unaware that in fifteen years' time she will be a bit-player in this haughty, disembowelled world. She will call Condé Nast's Hanover Square offices in London to speak with women named Miranda and Isabella, negotiate editorials for Caroline, text message Deborah Turbeville's assistant to arrange a shoot involving Louise Quinze furniture and teak escritoires. (McNeil 71)

The presence of the Canadian city is introduced as the context of Toronto, where the protagonist moves after leaving Cape Breton and where she has been living until the present time of the narration. From the familiar and immediate space of her childhood home the city seems to recede into a distant and ghastly world. She reviews in her mind scenes of her life with her husband:

> she sees them moving through a pallid city, bank towers breathing through their tops, plumes of smoke into a crisp linen sky, Llewelyn reads *Toronto Life*, scouting out the latest restaurants. Trattoria this, bistro that. *I am such a foodie*, he says. She is becoming resentful of this diminutive, consuming world. They go to restaurants where they eat mysterious substances wrapped in banana leaves, nouveau tamales, yucca fritters on the side, grilled crab, various kinds of aioli: mint, basil, lemon. (McNeil 87)

This focus on the urban as a display of consumable commodities coheres with Edward Soja's description of the city as both product and site of production of capitalism and global confluences. In his words, the "coalition of capital and the state worked effectively to replan the city as a consumption machine, transforming luxuries into necessities, as massive suburbanization created expanded markets for consumer durables" (101-102). Eve's experiences of the city are articulated through this process of material consumption and production; similarly, her cosmopolitan self is represented in a global

framework that parallels the negotiation of economic transactions that take place in the city, a framework that departs from organic relationships to the land that prevail in the rural area of Cape Breton: "Meanwhile her life is a shifting patchwork of countries, textiles, minerals, products. In the past four years she has done it all: illegally source stones, open-pit mining, fashion journalists, the requisite temperamental photographers, minor forms of bribery, Fair Trade, Unfair Trade" (McNeil 88). International dimensions interlock with the national expressed as the urban, the Canadian state performing as one of multiple points of convergence of which the global network is composed. When she is travelling abroad, she "longs for her espresso maker and her hot Trinity Bellwoods flat;" however, "the graphic prosperity of the city alienates her; she can't help thinking that real life is lived in more messy, exigent places. She is never quite content anywhere" (McNeil 88). Furthermore, her perception of Toronto as her home is compromised by physical and emotional distance. Whereas details from Cape Breton remained vivid for years in her mind, after three months away from her house and husband she feels that the contours around their shapes have become blurred in her memories: "*Home*. Could that really be home? Toronto, Lew. She was already forgetting what her apartment looked like. Was the ficus tree by the window or by the door? What kind of bed did she own?" (McNeil 285). Eve's reluctance to adhere to any of these contexts serves as a mechanism to avoid a hierarchical relationship between them. Her restless non-belonging points towards different spaces that never constitute holistic units of identification, rather, rural Cape Breton, urban Toronto, and transnational environments of airports and trade deals are all read as incomplete, with the subject, Eve, traversing each of the adjacent dimensions and incorporating into her own experience and construction of national identity the various (im)possibilities of each space. This character has the possibility to move within different geographical places and cultural spaces, and to assume equally diverse vantage points in her processes of identity construction. Caught between the global and the local, the nation here "becomes a liminal form of social representation, a space that is *internally* marked by cultural difference and the heterogeneous histories of contending peoples, antagonistic authorities, and tense cultural locations" (Bhabha 299). Rather than serving as a permanent or fixed marker of identity, Canadianness, understood as temporal within a liminal space, is therefore adapted and transformed according to Eve's needs. Her sense of being Canadian is not a constant referent of identification, and it even seems at times to be a category empty of meaning. It is instead contingent on the spaces she inhabits and the positions she adopts within them.

Conclusions

Nations, with their inevitably imagined foundations and the artificiality of national discourse, cannot but fail to provide a stable, homogeneous point of reference to define the heterogeneous groups that inhabit them. Appadurai contends that "electronic mass mediation and transnational mobilization have broken the monopoly of autonomous nation-states over the project of modernization" (10). While this may be the case on several socio-political levels, and indeed modernity must necessarily address the rigidity of nation-states, I argue that it is precisely the circulation of differences facilitated by globalization which in the long run provides some of the more fertile grounds on which nationalism as sentiment may flourish. Whereas the transnational provides a space that often breaks fixed boundaries, both geographical and cultural, the importance of these boundaries, operating in national terms, should not be overlooked. As this paper has aimed to demonstrate, national affiliation is not overridden by globalization. National identification must certainly be understood as temporary, yet real. The literary analysis of this novel illustrates the importance of this transient attachment. One indicator of the relevance of nationalism is the fact that this novel is inevitably placed within the context provided by national borders, and its narratives are intrinsically connected to the socio-cultural and historical discourses of the nation-state in which they are located and from which they spring. Whereas on an individual or personal level—even on

a collective level—Canadianness fails to provide a solid and stable source of identification, the characters in this novel—and especially the protagonist—are represented at different points as performing an attachment to the nation. A sense of belonging is often articulated in regional or local terms, while transnational referents offer spaces of contrast and opposition from which the national identity temporarily emerges. The interplay of these elements provides the context of what I believe must be the strategy to understand the emotional dimensions of nationalism, that is, as moments or instances of national identification, highly flexible and contingent on circumstances of positionality, race, class, gender and other differences.

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Appropriating Bodies: Discourses on Nationalism in India

Abstract: The overwhelming acceptance of neoliberal capitalist perspectives by the new Indian society, post globalization, has transformed itself and shifted away from the socialist vision of Nehru and other leaders of the earlier decades. Indian identity has been evolving, accommodating the altered social realities and in the new age of nationalistic fervour of a militant nature, the body of the citizen has emerged as the site where conflicting ideologies battle it out. Several forces are at play—economic, political, religious, cultural and of course the powers that define caste and class hierarchies as well. The shifting power centers in the new India demand from the bodies of its citizens a nationalistic fervour that often finds resistance and interestingly, voices of dissent find expression through bodily acts as well. This paper aims to trace this reshaping of national identity and the increasing methods of appropriations with regard to the corporeal selves of its citizens. Corporeality in this context includes the self-reflexive subject positions of the citizens as well as their embodied selves.

Keywords: nationalism, national identity, body politics, cultural identity, corporeal

National Identity in the Indian Context

Indian identity presents itself as a complex phenomenon in the present century, as multifarious discourses with conflicting ideological structures vie with one another, claiming ownership and dominion over the Indian self. The status of an emerging economy against the global trend of economic recession coupled with the fact that the world views India as its potential market complicates the discourse on Indian identity further. Indian identity against the backdrop of globalization is being redefined repeatedly, thereby challenging traditional positions and perspectives and asserting new selves structured around global images and identities. The world of telecommunication and media creates further complexities often confusing the virtual with the real. In this conundrum of identities shaped by the past, present and the future, the Indian sensibility remains puzzled, shaping itself to accommodate national and transnational identities and thereby creating spaces for conflict and confrontation. These discourses built around identities create subjectivities and the citizens of a nation, as social constructs, evolve out of these interactions between hegemonic ideologies that shape the nation. Since religious identity has remained a persistent influence in India, a study of religion within the broader framework of the nationalist narrative proves useful. The presence of several religions along with Hinduism with its polymorphous caste hierarchy infuse more dynamism into the identity politics that is perpetuated through cultural practices whereby the embodied selves of the citizens are brought to focus. My paper aims to throw light on the undercurrents of socio-political ideologies that shape and are in turn being shaped by the cultural matrix of India and its corporeal manifestations in the context of India national identity.

For a clearer perspective on the national identity, one needs to probe deeper into the concept of nation. The 'nation' as a construct builds itself on discourses, spaces, and myths and is populated by people who belong to various subject positions. Its coherence is emphasized through various processes, a prominent one involving the bodies of the citizens. Along with mapping territories, the corporeal selves of the citizens are also negotiated by nationalist agencies of power. Identities are constructed by the agencies of nationalist structures and "people have to comply with that conceptualization of identity in order to be recognized as political and juridical subjects" (Sokefeld 534). Identity is "characterized by a certain degree of fixation, continuity and institutionalization" (Sokefeld 534). The national identity is a vital and influential

one, despite the forces of globalization and transnationalism. It is constantly performed, and therefore the body of the citizen emerges as having immense symbolic value. It is to be emphasized "that identities, although posed by actors as singular, continuous, and bounded can be shown to be subject to the condition of plurality, intersectionality, and difference" (Sokefeld 538). In order to comprehend these elements that define national identities, a clearer perspective on nationalism is required:

> Nationalism is the term for a specifically modern phenomenon of cultural integration. This type of national consciousness is formed in social movements and emerged from modernization processes at a time when people are at once both mobilized and isolated as individuals. Nationalism is a form of collective consciousness which both presupposes a reflexive appropriation of cultural traditions that has been filtered through historiography and spreads only via the channels of modern mass communication. Both elements lend nationalism the artificial traits of something that is to a certain extent a construct, thus rendering it by definition, susceptible to manipulative misuse by political elites. (Habermas 22)

Thus, nationalism as a construct functions as an act of identification, a signifying process involving acts of loyalty and pride. India, as a postcolonial nation with its pluralistic multicultural population, found it an uphill task to define its national identity. The caste hierarchies and the ethnic groups complicated it further and the process of constructing a national identity became a highly politicized one. India's struggle for independence was not only the fight to reclaim the sovereignty of a nation or the territoriality of the homeland, but it was also about freeing the individuals occupying the territory from oppression and exploitation. Prior to independence, the body of the colonized was the site of violence, with the intention of annihilating a sense of self and the dignity of a free being. Gandhi's emergence as an undisputed leader of the freedom struggle and the overshadowing of the Congress Party by this charismatic leader deserve mention in the context of any study on the politics of national identities. Through his corporeal self, Gandhi, as a leader, represented an India that had hence neither been represented nor seen in the capacity of a national leader. His attire and his body symbolized the Indian constantly combating his poverty and backwardness. It was the Indian farmer, fragile yet strong with the determination to fight against all odds. The immensely strong political weapon *satyagraha* (a non-violent form of protest), where fasting became a national spectacle, had a leader whose frailty captured the attention of the Western world. The charismatic figure of the leader drew the rural masses on to the stage set for freedom struggle, leading them towards victory and towards modernity. The Post-Independence political and cultural environment underwent radical transformation under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru. His vision rooted in the discourses of modernity and rational scientific spirit guided the nation's growth. The shift was significantly towards a socialist perspective, but the underlying schisms in the nature of religious identities, ethnic identities and caste hierarchies remained unresolved. Subsequent decades saw the disillusionment subsequent to the euphoria of a newly independent nationhood. Like any other third-world nation, India underwent major transformations: politically, the process of democracy often turned into majoritarian populism; economically, a gradual shift from welfare State to capitalist State and, of course, culturally, where the shift was more complex and dynamic. While defining the national self, cultural practices thus emerge as integral and decisive.

National Identity and Culture

National identity and cultural practices play significant roles in defining a nation. From the repository of culture, ideological structures draw power and shape new identities: "Culture is a means of acting on or managing the social, accomplished by using cultural practices to shape and direct people's conduct in order to refashion individual's behaviour and to produce new forms of individuality" (Grossberg 172). Culture, even when transnational communication systems redefine the concept of nationhood, acts as a significant power in shaping national selves: "Culture is linked to the destiny of the nation-state by virtue

of its role as producer, protector and inculcator of an idea of national culture" (Readings 3). Nations sustain themselves by building cultural constructs along with their spatial identities:

> Culture produces, defines and is entrusted with national identity. It is a regulative idea that links the people (ethnos) or community (popular will) with the nation and even the State. The State, in fact, often builds its own identity and power by forging and strengthening the link between culture and nation. Thus, culture not only gives us unique insight into who we are—universally—as human beings, but also into our particularity—the history and tradition that have shaped our different identities. (Grossberg 186)

Culture emerges as the converging point where the signification process happens, when the complexities of human existence find expressions in the spatial-temporal dimension. This attributes power to cultural processes. Ideology often appears as culture and takes on the garb of norms, values and life practices. Power functions through these cultural practices that mould the citizens. The corporeal nature of these practices that become internalized by the citizens deepens the impact of power structures that remain hegemonic in society. Cultural practices that define nationhood constantly interact with global cultures and diasporic cultures resulting in a strong, militant and violent reactive politics operating within the national framework attempting to reinforce traditional norms and values. Citizens' bodies are, no doubt, ideal sites for such forceful reinforcements. The national identity is built around power that works as subject formation and according to Foucault, the body is the site for exercising power that is hegemonic and is the prerogative of the nation-state. Power "is the multiplicity of relations of force that are immanent to the domain wherein they are exercised, and that are constitutive of its organization; ... whose general pattern or institutional crystallization is embodied in the mechanisms of the state, in the formulation of the law, in social hegemonies" (Foucault 121-2). The nation thereby enjoys hegemonic power over the bodies of its citizens through cultural patterns and practices which the citizens are expected to perform.

Performing National Identity

Nationalism as a process functions through the space of the citizen's body and "the power relations of the nation-state and ideologies of nationhood entail particular national systems of corporeal production, systems that vary across time and space" (Radcliffe 216). Prior to globalization, the corporeal identity was flexible and heterogeneous with the presence of multifarious ethnic identities defying any uniformity in representing the Indian identity. Postmodern, post-globalization India depicts another scenario. The concept of 'Indian identity' was transformed radically, due to the active presence of telecommunication networks and the flow of information over the social media. The Indian diaspora, that cherishes an imagined homeland that is nurtured by nostalgia, envisioned an India which has its firm roots in the traditional heritage of the country that often identified itself with the Vedic religious past. Images of the Indian citizen are circulated far and wide reinforcing stereotypes that articulate the politics of cultural identity. The constant dialectic patterns of cultural flow between national and transnational discourses find representation in the body images telecasted through television. The body becomes "a site of social, political, cultural and geographical inscriptions, production or constitution" (Grosz 23).

Since the 1990s, India has undergone a radical transformation with its policies of economic liberalization following the 1991 economic crisis. There was an explosion of products in the market which had hitherto been controlled and regulated, limiting the flow of capital and goods. A consumer culture was eagerly welcomed that thrived on a vulgar display of wealth in a country whose global poverty ranking was at the bottom end globally, ranking 100th out of 119 countries according to data presented by the *Global Hunger Index* 2017.[1] The saturation of television channels and cyberspaces introduced the

[1] See *Global Hunger Index—Latest Global Hunger Index Results: Global, Regional and National Trends*

consumer to a variety of entertainment possibilities and a consumer culture was established which was largely for the urban middle and upper-class communities. The lack of communication networks connecting rural India with these sources of information and entertainment resulted in the rapid marginalization of rural India and the diminishing visibility of the poor from the Indian social scenario.

A celebration of transnationalist images that are products of neoliberal capitalism has begun heralding a journey towards frenzied consumerism. A heterogeneity which can be deemed superfluous is being propagated by the market-driven culture and it is being eagerly assimilated into the lives of the urban middle-class and the nouveau riche. Advertisements that communicate to these classes inundate the Indian television screens. These advertisements display bodies that are truly global, or to be precise, global by European standards, their figures, skin and clothes meant to be considered international. They hail the urban middle-class to cherish and to dream of such bodies. The advertisement for *L'Oreal Paris Hair Care* can be cited as an example.[2] Three gorgeous Indian female actors appear on the screen looking identical in suave Western attire with skins glossed to perfection and hair shining with the help of advanced computer technology. Ethnicities are carefully eliminated. Successful confident women are slim and fair complexioned denoting an upper-class-caste identity. Slender figures are translated as healthy, vibrant and cheerful personae. Fairness creams like *Fair and Lovely* have uniquely Indian advertisements that perpetuate fair complexion as the desirable skin tone and equate it with success and confidence.[3] Even body lotions and moisturisers like *Parachute Coconut Milk* exploit this fetish for fair skin as the ideal skin tone to sell their products.[4] There is a glaring absence of native, ethnic identities except while employing stereotypical images in a few select advertisements. Tourism is one sector where State often employs these images to market their product, namely, the nation and its identity: "Identity politics is often co-opted by the State through the commodification of diversity itself" (Bernstein 64). Thus, the States within a multi-cultural nation like India have been selling the plurality defined in terms of clothes, customs, and of course the bodies of the citizens. Draping ethnic culture on transnational bodies, such advertisements visualise the nation as it is imagined to be. Ethnicity is foregrounded in the God's Own Country tourism promotional videos by the State of Kerala. The bodies of the natives are strikingly ethnic, unlike the other advertisements. The State of Rajastan has similar promotional videos that highlight the cultural practices and attires of the State. Apart from these hyperreal spaces, cyberspace is another area where the body becomes a commodity for the world. Popular cultural icons are imitated in this process of body sculpting resulting in unrealistic prototyping for the Indian audience.

National Identity and the Hindu Identity

Though transnational images and identities have exerted a significant influence over Indian aesthetics and sensibility post-1990s, Indian national identity is shaped by forces other than the flows and networks of globalization. The ambiguity of Indian nationalism that grew out of colonial experiences and the postcolonial positions following independence has made identity discourses complex and varied. While the Eurocentric nature of nationalism called for an underlying unity, the multiplicity of ethnic, class and caste identities was marginalized and remained a source of discontent. Prior to Independence, cultural nationalism took on the advocacy of Hinduism with prominent Indians like Dayanand Saraswati and Bankim Chandra Chatterji [5] waxing eloquently on a nationalist identity that was primarily a Hindu one. "Hindu" and "Indian" were terms used synonymously by these writers and thinkers. Chatterji's *Anandamath* (1882), an iconic novel, is imagined by the Hindu radical thinkers as a text that helps them

http://www.globalhungerindex.org/results-2017/

[2] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJnEx8proYg

[3] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Aik4LKf8oM

[4] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0t7Rbw1CXU

[5] Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, popularly known as Bankim Chandra Chatterji

envision a Hindu nationalist identity. Hindu nationalism remained at the margins with the growing popularization of the Indian National Congress as the voice of the populace. With Gandhi at the helm, an iconic leader of a spiritualistic charismatic kind, presenting himself as a deeply spiritualistic person, identifying himself with the Hindu spiritual values, the binary of the Hindu and non-Hindu citizen was further established into the psyche of the masses. National identity in contemporary India encounters a religious dimension with Hindu extremist groups rising in popularity and finding a voice amongst the urban middle-class. Thus, religious and ethnic identities often emerge prominent in the definitions of Indianness which translate themselves as the welcoming vermilion (*thilak*) on the forehead, and other rituals often associated with Hinduism. When Tim Cook, the Chief Operating Officer of Apple Inc. came to India, he visited temples and wore dhoti with all the paraphernalia associated with a temple visit. He was welcomed with the saffron shawl with Sanskrit verses draped around his shoulders (Roy, "Why Is Apple").

The corporeal selves of the citizens remain important sites in the conflicting identity positions with regards to a pluralistic country like India. Nudity thus has a symbolic value in the current scenario and the responses to public display of nakedness speak eloquently about the politics of the body. Nude monks are invited to address Legislative Assemblies and national leaders venerate them (Sandhu, "Jain Monk"). The spectacle of reverence and celebration of these events on television as well as on the social media brings to focus the manner in which naked bodies are paraded and humiliated as vendetta or as part of the cultural nationalist agenda. A report tabled at the Special Plenary Session *Women and Violence in Gujarat*, describes the increasing number of incidents where Muslim women's bodies are targeted for violent attacks including parading naked, by right wing organizations (Renu Shah 3). Surveillance at the level of the State as well as community results in moral policing where the length of the attire becomes a punishable offence and punishments for moral offences are often in the form of public shaming of the body.

The corporeality of national identity demands from its citizens certain expressions and ritualistic practices that enable the construct of nationhood to thrive amidst the polyphony of identities in a country like India. The heterogeneity of the Indian body and bodily practices challenges the homogenizing agenda of the majoritarian identity politics. Such attempts result in consolidating the binaries and in Othering in the public and private spheres of the Indian society. When nationalistic politics begin to tear up the civil society, the human body becomes the site of control: "Today the discourse, especially when dealing with minorities, margins and dissenters, creates an unstable idea of citizenship, reducing it to a test, a certification that a surveillance society carries out continuously. It is a topsy-turvy world where one is a suspect and citizen simultaneously" (Viswanathan, "Have You Passed"). When colonial acts of sedition become internalized by a society, the body becomes a crucial marker of identity, bodily gestures assume supreme importance as loyalty tests become the order of the day: "Citizenship, he claimed, is now one of identification, not belonging. It becomes an exercise of certificates and clearances. If one protests, the charge of treason is added" (Viswanathan "Have You Passed"). This exacerbates the complex identity politics and the inherent divisiveness present in the Indian society. Such bellicose nationalism leaves a deep impact on the citizens' individual selves: "... when citizenship reduces participation to the level of a loyal jingoistic spectator, the fan club and the vigilante crowd provide the index of citizenship. Society becomes an excessive search for scapegoats. Belief becomes behavioristic and instead of citizenship, what we create is a society of mimic rationalists" (Viswanathan, "Have You Passed").

In acquiescence with the extreme right wing identity politics, neoliberal practices of a market economy remove the individual from the social spectrum and place him/her in an isolated, hyperreal space, bereft of any social commitment. Capitalism with its aggressiveness and competition lures the citizens towards its ideologies grounded on wealth creation. This shift in values has created a society that celebrates greed, gluttony, aggression and deceit and uses yardsticks of wealth to measure success. This new community demands hostility and war rather than peace and comradeship and seems to validate mob violence against

the body in the form of mass lynching, mob attacks and shaming especially of the subaltern bodies. National selves tend to ignore marginalized groups thus encouraging the politics of exclusion. "The politics of spectacle" (Turner 159) sanctions such violent acts which include stripping in public, thrashing and other violent acts in public. The body becomes the site to reinforce the hegemony of religion-based cultural identity. We find a shocking similarity in the nature of attacks by religious and political powers of right-wing fundamentalism asserting itself as the voice of national identity. To cite an example in this context, from the year 2013 to 2015, in the city of Mangalore there have been 96 reported moral policing and assault cases (Pathak, "Hindu-Muslim").

With identity politics assuming a radical dimension in the form of a religious national identity, Indian cultural practices saw a distinct shift in focus. This was foregrounded by the forces of globalization working simultaneously, which triggered off a scamper towards traditional cultural icons and symbols and ritualistic practices. Rigorous adherence to these practices and the presuming of the role of caretakers of cultural identity has resulted in mob attacks which focus on the Others: "At a local level, vigilante forces ... police the body and guard against any threat of sexuality either in terms of dress or in terms of the creativity of art and cinema" (Viswanathan, "Paranoid"). It is the subaltern bodies that bear the brunt when nationalism turns aggressive and begins to work with an agenda for enforcing uniformity in a multi-religious, multi-cultural nation. Dalit bodies and non-Hindu bodies are targeted and a national culture, with fear and insecurity ingrained in it, becomes embedded in the social system. According to the report offered by Human Rights Watch,[6] in 2016, India witnessed violent acts of exclusion and dehumanization where Dalits and Muslims were targeted in the name of beef consumption and cow slaughtering. According to a report by Minority Rights Group International,[7] anti-cow slaughter legislation adversely affected Dalits and Muslims, since they became targets of violent attacks often at the hands of Hindus instigated by rumors of beef consumption or livestock trading. Mobocracy in the form of punishment is meted out to social outcastes and Dalit women are paraded naked. A spectacle of frenzied mobs and belligerent acts of violence delineates this brand of nationalism where governance is marked by acts of surveillance: "This process of the nation-state as a panopticon, an institution for policing thought, has to be seen today as a part of an electoral democratic phenomenon. Majoritarianism in India has combined with a jingoist nationalism to carry out two separate sets of policing operations, the State and the mob (Viswanathan, "Have You Passed"). It is politics of exclusion that defines these acts of violence carried out on the bodies of the citizens, who with their truncated identities remain excluded from the grand narratives of the Indian social system.

While the citizens' bodies are targeted for nationalist political purposes, these bodies also emerge as signifiers of resistance. Since nationalism is interwoven into the cultural discourse through the body with a heightened significance in the present times, protests involving bodily practices as symbols of resistance dominate the cultural and political sphere. In Kerala, a young woman Jaya P. S. painted her body black to protest against the State-sponsored atrocities against Dalits. She roamed around the city, interacted with people, aroused their curiosity and created a space for discussion and debate, thereby creating awareness about the rampant acts of injustices against the Dalit community in India (Padanna, "Why This Indian"). Another remarkable act of resistance was against moral policing and originated in Kerala. This agitation named Kiss of Love (2014) was a revolutionary act defying conservative traditions that prohibited public display of affection. Kiss of Love was an innovative form of protest where youngsters gathered in public spaces and kissed each other. The protest spread to other parts of the country, primarily in towns and other urban areas ("How India Celebrated the Kiss of Love").[8]

[6] See: https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/india

[7] See: http://minorityrights.org/publications/narrowing-space-violence-discrimination-indias-religious-minorities/

[8] See: https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/news/How-India-Celebrated-The-Kiss-Of-Love/quickstirshow/45107512.cms

Maleness and Identity

The identity of the Indian male, as it has evolved over time, and the Hindu male body in particular, offers interesting insights into the relationship between the citizen's body and nationalist sensibilities. Male bodies, being the hegemonic one in a patriarchally conditioned society like India, present themselves as ideal tools for evaluation in the context of any study on body politics. In a society that has been encountering a systematic religious radicalization, with right wing politics gaining greater visibility, Hindu male bodies are being trained to evolve as nationalist patriotic selves with their religious identity defining and designing their Indianness. The body, thus, becomes the space, the stage where tropes of nationalism are played out. Nationalist spaces are re-defined with a distinct patriarchal flavor, with the arrogant masculinity and chaste femininity prominently displayed. A simulacrum of nationalism which blends within itself patriotic fervor and glorification of martyrdom is part of the discourse. The body of the soldier thus becomes the trope, constructing the metaphor of the son, the protector of his land. Soldiering becomes the noble profession to be revered and celebrated and the body of the soldier disciplined and adorned with weapons, or a military vehicle emerges as the metaphor for patriotism and unquestionable loyalty to the nation. The soldier reminds the citizen of the territoriality of the nation which is to be considered sacred and integral to national pride. The arrogance of national identity emerges clearly through the images of the soldiers dead or alive. The dead soldier's body as the symbol of martyrdom further consolidates the signification process in the context of nationalism: "Men are as much inscripted into nationalism as women in the productive effects of national power, although of course they have different tools at their disposal, given their fundamental metonymic agency" (Radcliffe 214).

The Indian male body is an interesting trope with national and transnational identities shaping the contours of his physical self and Hindu religious bodies "make politicized use of ritual spaces and religious ritual practices as devices for mobilization" (Friedland 140). Hindu right-wing groups lay claim to the Indian male body through rigorous training sessions ensuring a healthy, disciplined routine which is closely akin to the training at 'akharas.' *Akharas* designate a place where young men assembled for bodybuilding, exercise and sports. It was ritualistic with a temple, dedicated to Hanuman. Members of an *akhara* were given training in physical prowess and gradually developed a strong collective attachment to it (Jeffrelot 35). This culture of rigorously trained Hindu male bodies indoctrinated in Hindutva ideologies, has flourished since then, as *Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangh* or the RSS. As Joseph Alter says, "In the sakhas of the RSS, as in the first political akharas or in the terrorist societies, participants trained in drill with the lathi and played team games such as Kabaddi" (567).

Simultaneously growing with this religious ethnic identity of the Hindu male self is the process of homogenization that has begun with the trends of globalization, in the depiction of Indian masculinity, even though the reality has been glaringly diverse. Indian films with their international markets have favored the European standards of body types with regards to male bodies: "The heteronormative and hypersexualized man, embodied by Indian male stars, is a commodity that India exports as both an economic imperative and an ideological one" (Balaji, "Indian Masculinity"). The commodification of the male body aids in this process of creating the ideal body type for the Indian man endorsed by the market as well as by the cultural nationalist agenda of the hegemonic groups: "Because the Web is a transnational platform, India's glorification of the new Indian man—which is simply a glocalized Xerox of American/Eurocentric masculinity—is constantly being uploaded for global audiences" (Balaji, "Indian Masculinity"), thereby reinforcing a stereotype that the Indian male strives to achieve.

The dynamic interactions of the national culture with the global culture and with the diasporic cultures result in complex outcomes where on the one hand a globalizing trend becomes visible and on the other hand a militant, violent reactive politics operates to reinforce traditional norms and values. Expressions of this interaction become visible on the bodies of the citizens and women's bodies emerge as strategic sites

in the structures of nationalist politics. The contemporary Indian society, having made a radical shift in its ideological preferences, seeks to reinvent itself rediscovering myths and legends from the distant past, re-reading historical events and evolving new icons and role models to emulate. The forging of a new identity with a distinct religious flavor has also deepened the rifts and led to further polarization into distinct regional, political, religious and ethnic identities. Nationalism is transformed into "a theology and an official state ideology" (Viswanathan, "Paranoid"). Amidst this chaos, compounded by the forces of neoliberal capitalism, women's bodies become the target and the weapon. Patriarchal forces collude with other social, political and cultural agents to tame the female body to suppression. Shaming and taming the female body, thereby marginalizing the female identity, emerges as a prominent agenda even in the age of postmodernity.

As Friedland argues,

> Religious nationalism, unlike the capitalist market or the democratic state, has the organization of sexuality at its center. Religious nationalists give primacy to the family, not to democracy or the market, as the social space through which society should be conceived and composed. Familial discourse, with its particularistic and sexual logic of love and loyalty, is pervasive. (135)

This explains the oppressive patriarchal, paternal perspectives adopted by the right-wing supporters towards women. A regressive social dynamics is at work in the case of women, sexuality and the gender-neutral community. As Parul Verma writes, "Women's bodies thus became arenas of violent struggle. Women were humiliated, tortured, brutally raped, and murdered as part of the process that reflected the communal, national and religious conquest by the opponents. The rapes didn't just lead to the violation of the body but it symbolized the political conquest" ("Normalization of Rape"). Women were raped in public as part of a nationalist agenda. They were sometimes burnt and killed after brutal torture, gang rape and often paraded naked. Utmost bestiality was displayed in these cases where the matter concerned was inter-religious relationships involving the woman or her close relatives. Women were attacked as part of moral policing where the source of contestation became the onslaught of values of individual freedom and sexual choices on the traditional cultural heritage claimed by conservatives as Indian morality: "The act of being a Nationalist or fighting for the Nation became a regressive act of in-acting of the fantasy of Eroticized dysfunctional Nationalism, on the bodies of the woman of the 'other' community" (Verma, "Normalization of Rape"). With religious nationalism thus foregrounded in the discourses on national identities, Indian identity politics demands deliberations that revolve around the altered political environment.

Conclusions

India is passing through a complex phase of identity politics which witnesses a blending of national and transnational selves. Globalization has resulted in a deluge of multinational corporations finding an ever-growing market in the Indian subcontinent and the presence of these along with the flow of information through a widely connected telecommunication network has consolidated the transnational image of the global Indian. This pull towards a new identity with remnants of the old Indian self finds an equally powerful opponent in the nationalistic traditionalistic forces of the rightwing organizations in India: "As a response to both postmodernisation and globalization, there will be a corresponding fundamentalization of culture and society by social groups who want to oppose post-modern consumerism" (Turner 155). Hinduism, unlike Semitic religions, cannot claim to be bound by the sacred writings of a particular text or by a particular god-like figure, and therefore depends on ritualistic practices of a variegated kind. Hence bodily acts of a religious nature gain primary importance. When religion becomes a tool to create a unified identity, surpassing all other linguistic, social, ethnic barriers, it becomes

inevitable to forge histories of a pseudo-nationalistic kind that bind together religious and national identities. But the cultural space where it operates also finds consumerism as a powerful presence, and this intense dynamic power-play between religious nationalism and transnationalism positions the Indian body as the perfect site to contest these forces. Interrogating into their nature as well as their strength to influence society opens up interesting perspectives on issues of patriarchal powers—powers that alienate and marginalize—and the impact of these forces on the average Indian population. Interestingly, the very forces of patriarchy and religious and ethnic diversity that prevented the formation of a homogenous Indian identity now act as the deterrent in creating uniformity under the leadership of Hindu extremist nationalism and help sustain the heterogeneity and multi-culturalist identity of the nation.

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Book Review: *Două mituri literare hispanoamericane* by Diana-Adriana Lefter

Reviewed work
Diana-Adriana Lefter, *Două mituri literare hispanoamericane,*[9] Pitești: Editura Universității din Pitești, 2014, [122 pgs]. Print.

The most recent publication of Diana-Adriana Lefter, a well-known researcher in mythocritics and mythanalysis, is a peculiar achievement: it is the first book where she discusses the presence and the functioning of myths in the Hispanic-American literature. Professor Lefter has already published many other works dealing with the relation between myths and literature, but all her previous works—including *Introduction à l'étude du mythe dans la littérature* (București, 2008) or *Théâtre et mythe. Mythe et théâtre* (Craiova, 2013)—focused on French literature.

Certainly, the Hispanic-American literature is a perfect area of investigation for a specialist in mythocritics, as the magnificent literature of the *real maravilloso* ("fantastic realism") is the artistic expression of a linguistically unified continent where myths, symbols and miracles are parts of the everyday life. On the other hand, the Hispanic-American literature of the so-called boom[10] deals not only with myths, but also with politics. Thus, the *novela del dictador* ("the novel of the dictator") is the artistic expression of a constant preoccupation of the writers of this generation for the political life of the continent, namely for the impact of dictators' regimes on the people. The *real maravilloso* literature and the *novela del dictador* are the two main genres that are considered by Diana-Adriana Lefter when applying the mythocritic method to the study of the chosen texts. More than that, Professor Lefter extends her analysis of myths in Hispanic-American literature with a focus on the myth of the writer, which is not specific for this literature, but a modern approach, common to literary analysis in general.

I want to stress that Diana-Adriana Lefter has very cleverly treated the Hispanic-American literature as a coherent and unified literary space that puts together writers and texts from all the Spanish-speaking countries of Latin America, and thereby emphasizing that that the linguistic coherence and the common cultural and mythologic heritage are the underpinnings of this literature. This is demonstrated by the presence of recurrent myths, themes, and symbols in Hispanic-American Literature. In the Foreword of her work, Diana-Adriana Lefter clearly states her opinion about the unique and unified Hispanic-American literary space:

> When we speak about Hispanic-American literature, we do not envisage, as we, Europeans, are culturally accustomed, to the literature of a specific country; we refer to the literature produced by a language—the Spanish—and by a culture—the Hispanic one—in a specific geographical space: South, Central and North America and the Caribbean Islands. It is, for us, a coherent space of artistic expression, resulted from the violent encounter, followed by the mixture of two great civilizations: that of the indigenous people and that

[9] English version: *Two Literary Hispanic-American Myths* (editor's translation)
[10] Literary movement of the years 1960s-1970s, when writers such as Julio Cortázar (Argentina), Carlos Fuentes (Mexico), Mario Vargas Llosa (Peru) and Gabriel García Márquez (Colombia) became famous world-wide

> of the Spanish Empire. In a very special and unique way, the language of the conquerors became the mother tongue of the newborn populations, while their culture, mentalities and myths keep alive both the inheritance of the ancient land and that of the conquerors.
> This is why one can find common themes and subjects and similar modes of artistic expression in the Hispanic-American literature; they are born from this initial violent encounter, which represents both death and birth. This tormented beginning forever marks the identity, the traditions and the mentality of Hispanic-American nations. Thus, the Hispanic-American literature is the territory where specific myths are born, and those myths are originated in the socio-political, cultural and religious peculiarities of this complex space; on the other hand, in the deep-seated and persistent European influence and imposition of presumably "universal" myths. (our translation) (Lefter 7)

The book is structured in two main chapters, treating one Hispanic-American myth, that of the Dictator, and a universal myth, that of the Writer. Diana-Adriana Lefter chooses Gabriel García Márquez's *El otoño del Patriarca* and Carlos Fuentes's play *Todos los gatos son pardos* to illustrate the myth of the Dictator—a Colombian and a Mexican making use of the same local myth. On the other hand, the author of the book illustrates the functioning of the modern myth of the Writer with a condensed novel by Segio Pitol, *Domar a la divina garza*.

The pretext of the first chapter, dealing with the myth of the Dictator, is a phrase pronounced by Gabriel García Márquez in his conversations with Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza and quoted by Diana-Adriana Lefter: the Dictator is the only mythological character produced by Latin America. This allegation validates the approach that Diana-Adriana Lefter proposes for both texts discussed: the political-mythological one.

In fact, the author bases her analysis on Raoul Girardet's theory and concepts, developed in his well-known *Mythes et mythologies politiques*. In this way, Diana-Adriana Lefter is original in her approach of the myth of the Dictator in García Márquez's famous novel. We do not have to remember here that numerous other studies have been consacrated to this topic, but Professor Lefter's one is unique. She does not limit her study to the traditional features of the Dictatorial character, but instead she shows clearly that the mythological allure of the character is given by his successive construction as the Saver, hero of normality and exceptional hero. Thus, the main character in García Márquez's novel embodies, as Diana-Adriana Lefter demonstrates, all the archetypes of this myth: Cincinnatus, Alexander the Great, Solon and Moses. More than that, the author of the present work also deals with the main characteristics of the dictator as a character: the absolute expression of power—in society and in private life, showing clearly that the dictator is a literary manifestation of the Latin American macho—and his difficult relationships with women and femininity. In fact, Diana-Adriana Lefter demonstrates that there are just two types of relations possible between the dictator and women: philia and eros.

The second part of the first chapter is a very pertinent approach to Carlos Fuentes's most important play, *Todos los gatos son pardos*. It is, in our opinion, one of the most interesting analyses of this work, as the perspective is once again that of the political myth. Professor Lefter states, at the beginning of her demonstration, that a large part of Fuentes' literary work is centered on the concept of *mexicanidad*, which defines and explains the formation and the pecularities of the Mexican people. Thus, the historical fact—Cortes's conquest of the Aztecs—is cleverly transformed by Fuentes into a myth of origins, as Diana-Adriana Lefter stresses in her text, an explanation of the *mexicanidad* and of the *chingada* ("the physical and cultural violation of the Aztecs"). From this perspective, the traditional myth of Quetzalcóatl, transposed by the historical conquest, turns into a political myth and Marina, the mother of the first Mexican, herself becomes a mythical character. Professor Lefter writes: "[...] in *Todos los gatos son pardos*, Fuentes uses the myth of Quetzalcóatl as a pretext for a new political myth, created by Fuentes himself, the myth of the foundation of Mexico. The hero of this new myth is a woman, Marina [...]"(our translation) (Lefter 87).

Diana-Adriana Lefter's conclusion, regarding Fuentes' text is that those transformations of the traditional myth turn it into a political one, where power is the main theme and this power is embodied by the two main male characters: Moctezuma and Cortès.

The second part of Professor Lefter's work deals with the modern myth of the Writer, in relation with the theme of communication, as they are presented in Sergio Pitol's *Domar a la divina garza*. The author's approach is based on the modern theories of communication, namely those of Umberto Eco, Lotman and Pierce and the goal is a focus on the communication issue, as this one is assumed by the various writers present as characters or just *in abîme* in Pitol's novel. Generally speaking, Lefter's thesis is that the quality of communication, the succes or, on the contrary, the failure of it depends on the writers competence and on the cooperation that is established or not between the producers of the message and the respective receivers. Diana-Adriana Lefter shows that there are three communicators in Pitol's novel: the "old writer" who presents his literary project in the *liminar* ("introductory") chapter; Dante C. de la Estrella, the homodiegetic narrator and Gogol, the Russian writer, who appears *in abîme*. Professor Lefter follows the evolution of these three writers and observes a common feature for all of them: the production of their respective texts is accompanied by a gradual physical destruction of the producers. Thus, the author considers that Pitol's novel is a three-level story of the Writer's death, of his sacrifice in producing his work.

Over all, Diana-Adriana Lefter's most recent book is a very modern and innovative approach of a well-known literary space, the Hispanic-American one, a very interesting and intriguing text, opening new and pertinent perspectives on this literature.

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Book Review: History, Biography and a Touch of the Poet

Reviewed work:
Maria-Camelia Dicu, *The World in Its Times. A Study of Yeats's Poetic Discourse Versus the Concept of History*, Târgu-Jiu: Editura Academica Brâncuși, 2016. [226 pgs]. Print.

Maria Camelia Dicu's book suggests an approach of William Butler Yeats's poetical discourse through relating it, above all, to the concept of history, but also to those of tradition, symbolism, and modernity. The mythical dimension is not overlooked, given the poet's propensity for Irish folklore and legends, in which he found innumerable sources of inspiration and renewal for his artistic output.

History is filtered by Yeats through the specter of biography, which Dicu emphasizes by following the correspondences between personal, local, and national history. In Ireland's case, turbulent national history around the turn of the century, was the general framework for the ongoing process of symbolization and allegorization, which created poetic space that recuperates mythology and mythologizes in its turn, and renders it unique among the ideological constructs with similar frames from the same historical period.

The main theoretical touchstone, as outlined in the Introduction, in a somewhat oblique manner, is Paul Ricoeur's text on *Memory, History, Forgetting*—with its emphasis on the polarization of the individual memory and the collective one. The peculiarity of this relation in Yeats's case is explored in other sections of the book as well.

In the chapter "Yeats's Biography as an Anglo-Irish Artist," the author identifies the most significant biographical benchmarks, among which the image of the father comes first. Yeats's father was an overwhelming influence on him in spite of the latter's fleeing to the New World as a result of the family destructuring.[11] A more detailed analysis, perhaps Freudian, Lacanian or feminist, could have been of interest for the way Yeats perceived and dealt with the idea of paternal authority both in his life and work.

An analysis such as this could have been extended over the poet's relations with the most impacting feminine figures in his life, in lieu of the undue stress laid on chronology and facts. Femininity, and gender issues, could provide interesting (at least) explanations about the dissolving of the individual conscience in the collective conscience. One might attempt such an approach in subchapters 1 and 4 of the fourth Chapter, "Yeats's Historical Cycles in Poetic Representation," in which the focus is on family life and love affairs.

For Yeats gender issues functioned as a form of agency in shaping the act of creation—either through gradual abandon, or, in his mother's case, through substitution, if we think of Lady Augusta Gregory, or through unmediated frustration-obssession in regards to the relation with Maud Gonne.

In the second chapter, "Yeats Within the Irish Revival," the idea of dissolving the individual conscience in the collective one is given more room and, at the same time, the book rightly captures the writer's desire to find and appropriate the perfect *perfectible* pattern for his creation. Through returning to tradition, particularly outlined in his epic poem *The Wanderings of Oisin*, through the will to build a true

[11] Actually, Yeats's father abandoned a promising legal career and took up painting, much to the dismay of his wife. And he frequently moved house after that, between England and Ireland, ending in 1907, at the age of 69, in New York, where he died in 1922.

national Irish theater and through assuming involvement in "The Whirl of Irish History," his focusing on the concept of history is highlighted.

In the chapter wholly devoted to the historical dimension, Dicu unfolds and deploys Paul Ricoeur's work on memory, remembering, and forgetting and their passive vs. active sides, respectively. The names of Plato, Socrates, Spinoza, John Locke, Henri Bergson, Marc Bloch, Maurice Halbwachs, Gaston Bachelard and others are invoked, all making up a good theoretical preamble, yet with less adherence to the literary texts.

Yeats's participation in the *local* (read *national*) and European history while being twice minoritarian is carefully analyzed. First as Anglo-Irish and second as Protestant in a mostly Catholic country, Yeats is forced to evade and dwell within a discourse that he builds by his own rules and principles, in order to persuade his contemporaries—and not from a nationalist perspective—of the necessity of a unified conscience.

The author of the book justly observes this attitude, which implies the opening to the tradition-anchored experiment and to the modernism in which the late Victorian writer tended to believe less. From such seeming mésalliances a style and a poetic universe are forged under the sign of a complex and accomplished maturity. The desire to offer himself and to the Irish community a way to reclaim a role in the world history and culture, made him vulnerable to Ezra Pound's spell, as they shared the will to renew the lyrical discourse of the twentieth century.

Also of interest is the chapter on "Yeats's Celtic Heliolatry and/or Elitism," in which the politics of the writer's aesthetics is questioned. His opinions and idiosyncrasies did not always resonate with those of his contemporaries or with true democratic values. They do not run against the belief, to be met in other authors as well, in the necessity of educating certain elites meant to ideally run ideal states, with the risk of embracing totalitarianism.

The author notices, in this respect, Yeats's ideological flaws and, at the same time, his capacity to transcend them in memorable works. *The Second Coming*, a poem of somber premonitions, is consistent with other works such as *Sailing to Byzantium*, in which various ages from the history of mankind are perceived as landmarks for the end of certain historical cycles. They are Golden Ages on the brink of dissolution, yet preparing the seedbed for emerging cultures, such as the one of a free Ireland, which in its turn will reach its own Golden Age someday, and therefore will be later subjected to nostalgic retrievals.

All in all, an articulated book, capturing all the main stages of the great Irish author's work, more fluid in the second part, as the author gains more confidence in arguing her critical perspective.

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Book Review: *A Short History of Drunkenness* by Mark Forsyth

Reviewed work:
Mark Forsyth, *A Short History of Drunkenness*, London: Viking, 2017, [256 pgs]. Print.

As Kingsley Amis, the unquestionable master of dipsography[12] observes, alcohol is a "contentious" topic (197). Yet, there has been a plentiful supply of publications which focalize drink, from the eighteenth-century *The Drinker's Dictionary* (1736) by Benjamin Franklin to the very recent *Volcanic Wines* (2016) by John Szabo. A bookshelf of publications concerning drink might contain volumes which meet various tastes and expectations: bartender handbooks, oenophilic studies, or guides to whiskies, also such seemingly (and deceptively) exotic ones as those distilled in the Land of the Cherry Blossoms, the proof to be found in Dave Broom's *The Way of Whisky: Journey Around Japanese Whisky* (2017).

Among the latest titles is *A Short History of Drunkenness* (2017) by Mark Forsyth, in which he approaches the theme from the historical perspective. The title might be slightly misleading, possibly implying a didactic tinge. However, Forsyth's book is nowhere near that kind of format, his style being both informative and entertaining. This said, even though *A Short History of Drunkenness* is much informal and interspersed with witticisms, it does draw on a rich bibliography, including scientific journals, poetical works, anthropological studies, and even the Bible. Consequently, despite its stylistic lightness, it is based on extensive reading.

In general, Forsyth follows Chesterton's observation that "no animal ever invented anything so bad as drunkenness—or so good as drink" (234). Thus, *A Short History of Drunkenness* concentrates on the cultural significance of drink, from the prehistoric period to the short-lived experiment of American Prohibition,[13] the author's explanation being as follows: "Even though the active ingredient—ethanol—is identical, people will alter their behaviour depending on the origins and cultural associations of the tipple in question" (2). Forsyth provides a variety of examples: for instance, the habit of pouring beer on the ancestors' graves by members of a Kenyan tribe (4), elaborate drink rituals performed by the Ancient Egyptians (36-49), or the social implications of the English gin epidemic of the 1700s, described in great detail in the chapter titled "The Gin Craze" (151-168).

Admittedly, the socio-cultural aspects of drink have been discussed in quite a number of books, so Forsyth's attempt might seem unoriginal, which to an extent it inevitably is, yet he manages to remain fairly idiosyncratic. What Forsyth does while surveying the various cultural and historical backgrounds is to show that the question of drinking and drunkenness goes far beyond the simple sober vs. drunk opposition. In order to do this, he searches for examples in the animal world. One such is the fact that unsuccessful male fruit-fly suitors overindulge in fermented products when they have their "romantic advances spurned by a cruel and disdainful female fruit-fly" (8). It is not that Forsyth suggests the fair sex is to blame for the (admittedly) predominantly male problem of drink abuse, but the image does seem to

[12] In other words, a comprehensive study of drink.
[13] In the same chapter Forsyth explains that Prohibition was not, as many might think, an American invention, for alcohol had earlier been banned in places such as Norway, Finland or even New Zealand (cf. 225).

evoke the lovelorn males drowning their sorrows. Another drink-based analogy can be found in the results of an experiment in which the consumption of alcohol among rats proves to affect mainly males of the lowest hierarchical position (cf. Forsyth 9), which is certainly most telling in terms of the relation between drinking and the social status.

Emphasizing the role of drink in various contexts is the dominant feature of *A Short History of Drunkenness*. A good example is the manner in which drink could have contributed to the revolution in Russia: "In 1914, Tsar Nicholas II outlawed the sale of vodka in all Russia. In 1918, Tsar Nicholas and all his family were executed in a basement in Yekaterinburg. These two facts are not unrelated" (201). One might ponder here whether this is not a far-fetched suggestion, but Forsyth's further explanation does provide some food for thought when he relates to the theory that the 1914-17 period encompasses the only time in Russian history during which the Russians were capable of a more sober judgement of the way they had been ruled (cf. 202). By the same token, Forsyth reveals the function of drink in the world of politics when he refers to the mechanism of winning voices by George Washington during the 1758 elections to the House of Burgesses, Washington's election expenses including a whole list of drinks offered during the campaign (cf. 182-183).

Discussing the various historical and cultural perspectives, Forsyth does not forget to touch upon the religious backgrounds, particularly in the chapter called "The Bible" (71-80). His comment that "Jesus started his career in a shower of booze" (77) sounds slightly Monty Pythonesque, but otherwise it is not only a reference to Jesus turning water into wine at Cana, but a reminder of the significance of this particular drink in the Christian rites. However, to the more devout Muslims, Forsyth's discussion on drink and Islam may appear somewhat blasphemous, even though it is based on hard facts. These include the story of Babur, the founder of the Mughal Empire, and his propensity for drink, or an interesting artefact preserved for posterity, namely "a wine jug carved with the words *Allahu Akbar*" (114) used by his great-grandson, Jahangir. Forsyth briefly attempts to explain the complexity of the (non)drinking phenomenon in the Islamic world, drawing the following conclusion: "Drinking is forgivable. A Muslim, in most sects, could drink and then repent. But believing that drinking is not a sin, is a sin" (114).

One of the most interesting chapters, "The Wild West Saloon" (182-200), dispels the Hollywood-made myths to be found in the western movies. Step by step, Forsyth debunks various clichés, such as the famous batwing doors (cf. 191), which in reality looked differently, much as the general topography of the saloon as such. In a similar vein, Forsyth compares the rules governing the behaviour at the bar, which also differed from those available in films.

Apart from rebutting various misconceptions concerning drink, Forsyth's discussion makes one realise that drink was an important part of the human culture long before we commonly believe it appeared on the scene. To those convinced, for instance, that the beer culture belongs to the public houses, it will be enlightening to read the passages about the Sumerian beer vats, which allowed to brew different kinds of the drink: "barley beer, emmer-wheat beer, brown beer, dark beer, light beer, red beer, sweet beer, beer with honey and all sorts of other spices" (29). And all this dating back more than 5000 years.

Finally, drink and the language, or more precisely the lexical matters. On the definitional level, Forsyth outlines the difference between the Greek symposium and the Roman convivium (84), explains that vomitorium (cf. 86) is mistakenly believed to serve the very purpose it suggests, and that "Mā-ul-Hiāt" (116) is the Arabic equivalent of 'the water of life'. From a morphological perspective, he ponders on the existing drink collocations and compounds: "There's a reason we have lager-louts but not vermouth-vandals or Campari-contrarians" (3).

If there is anything Forsyth's book is short of it is probably the more contemporary focus, but admittedly, the area for discussion in this respect is so wide that it requires a separate study. Instead, Forsyth includes an interesting futuristic perspective for drink aficionados:

> Sagittarius B2N. It's a cloud 26,000 light years away, and those who start the journey will not be there for its completion. But it's 150 light years across, and three million times the mass of the sun: an unimaginably vast cloud of naturally occurring space alcohol. And there, finally, in the nether-reaches of nothingness we shall, because we are human, become cosmically drunk. (231)

This seems to be the modern equivalent of the Valhalla, where, as Forsyth writes in the chapter about the Vikings, the deceased warriors will be "drunk for ever" (130). Whether such a finale is a blessing or a curse is another matter, but as *A Short History of Drunkenness* perfectly shows, drink, drinking, and, most importantly, drunkenness is a phenomenon inherent in our culture, and its 'history' goes on.

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